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Drug Arrest Turns a Promising Hill Career Sour

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On paper, Eric M. Breindel's life looked perfect. At 27, his resume included a magna cum laude degree from Harvard College and a degree from Harvard Law School, a nearly completed doctorate from the London School of Economics, a glittering list of honors, fellowships and scholarships, and a place on the Council of Foreign Relations.

A protege of Sen. Daniel P. Moynihan (D-N.Y.), he had recently joined the staff of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, where he was trusted with information classified as top secret.

Last week, Breindel stared blankly ahead as he waited to be arraigned in U.S. District Court on a misdemeanor charge that he bought heroin from an undercover police officer. His face was pallid and perspiring, and his walk was shaky. When instructed by Magistrate Jean F. Dwyer to surrender his passport, Breindel appeared confused, finally whispering to his lawyer that he could not recall if he has a current one.

To Breindel's friends—who include many prominent figures in the journalistic and academic worlds of New York and Washington—the news that he had been arrested along with another lawyer for allegedly buying five packets of heroin for

\$150 in a Northeast Holiday Inn came as a profound shock.

"He's a golden youth. He's very brilliant. He's full of charm," said Commentary Editor-in-Chief Norman Podhoretz. "It seems so outlandish."

His friends say they had no idea there were any shadows over Breindel's life. They paint a portrait of an outgoing, intense young man whose sense of political commitment and dedication was forged in his parents' experiences as survivors of the Holocaust. They remember his energy and the ambition that seemed to survive despite the debilitating pain of a wrestling injury that failed to re-

spond to medical treatment and was beginning to deprive him of the use of his right hand.

Barely out of law school, Breindel was a well-respected member of Washington's neoconservative circles, and his articles on foreign affairs appeared in a wide spectrum of magazines and journals, ranging from *The Wall Street Journal* to *Rolling Stone* magazine.

To Sen. Daniel Patrick Moynihan (D-N.Y.), who knew Breindel since the young man attended one of his seminars at Harvard, and who later hired Breindel for the intelligence committee, the arrest represented a "personal tragedy."

"I have known Mr. Breindel since he was quite a young man," Moynihan said in a prepared statement. "He showed the greatest promise. I can scarcely express my own sorrow, but that can in no way affect my duties."

Moynihan asked for—and received—Breindel's resignation the day he was arraigned.

Breindel declined to be interviewed on the advice of his attorney, Jamie S. Gorelick.

The promise that was so disastrously derailed in a New York Avenue motel room began in the quiet elegance of New York's Gramercy Park, where Breindel grew up in an atmosphere of prosperity and intellectual vitality. But there was another legacy in his life: Breindel's mother, Sonya, was a victim of Nazi persecution and went into hiding in France during World War II. His father, Joseph, a New York obstetrician, came to America before the war began.

The knowledge of the pain and humiliation experienced by his parents—with whom he has a close relationship—never left Breindel, according to friends. "He was extremely-conscious of his background," said Leon Wieseltier, a friend and contributing editor to the *New Republic*. "He's profoundly devoted to this country because of what it did for his parents."

As a child of survivors of the Holocaust, Breindel last month participated in a panel discussion in Washington on the pressures felt by people in such a position. The children of survivors respond to their parents' plight in "diverse and often unpredictable ways," Breindel's fellow panelist, Dr. Mark Tykocinski, a fellow of the National Institutes of

Health, remarked at the gathering attended by more than 10,000 survivors of Nazi persecution.

As his fellow panelists recall it, Breindel himself sounded a theme he has often expressed to friends—that the way to avoid such an occurrence in the future is to become politically active.

"He always had a deep interest in politics and history," said Menachem Z. Rosensaft, a New York lawyer who is chairman of the International Network of Children of Holocaust Survivors. Rosensaft, who asked Breindel to serve on the panel, had known Breindel and his family for years, attending Jewish holiday celebrations in their apartment.

"He would read every book published on the Holocaust and Jewish suffering and discuss it," Rosensaft said.

Breindel attended Phillips Exeter Academy, where he was chairman of the school paper, secretary of his graduating class, and a wrestling champion. At Harvard, he was elected to Phi Beta Kappa and served as editorial chairman of the *Harvard Crimson*. He graduated from Harvard in 1977 with a raft of honors that included the Harvard College Scholarship, the John Harvard Scholarship, and a Center for International Affairs' fellowship.

"Eric's work in Moynihan's seminar was so brilliant he stood out from all the rest," said Rozlyn L. Anderson, a lawyer with Milbank, Tweed, Hadley & McCloy in New York and a classmate of Breindel's since the eighth grade. She described Breindel as "friendly and gregarious." Besides having a driving ambition, she said, "He existed on very little sleep."

Breindel left Harvard Law School to attend the London School of Eco-

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